



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.1758 | FAX (517) 373.0938
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/cassis/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, June 13, 2003

Contact: Lisa Posthumus
(517) 373-1758

Jeff Succumbs to Legislative Pressure

Cassis Announces Waterford Public Hearing June 18 for Beck/Wixom Rds.

(LANSING) – State Senator Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, today announced Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Director Gloria Jeff has succumbed to legislative pressure by setting up a public hearing for residents of Oakland County on Wed., June 18 regarding MDOT's five year plan for road projects, which does not include the Beck and Wixom road projects.

"The residents of Oakland County have voiced their outrage over the cancellation of the Beck and Wixom road projects and, to my pleasure, the Department now realizes the mistake they made in canceling those two vital projects," Cassis said. "Since the Department's deferment announcement, Director Jeff has exhibited a poor line of communication with the Legislature."

Recently, MDOT announced a series of public hearings to discuss their proposed 2003-2007 5-Year Road and Bridge Plan. While 16 of the 34 deferred projects are in Oakland County, MDOT failed to conduct one of those hearings in Oakland County.

Immediately upon hearing Oakland County was left off the list, Senator Cassis joined Sens. Shirley Johnson, R-Royal Oak, and Mike Bishop, R-Rochester, in blasting Director Jeff for her failure to not only include Oakland County in the hearings, but also for her lack of communication with Oakland County transportation officials. On June 4, Director Jeff inexcusably skipped a meeting with the Oakland County Road Commission with neither notice nor apology.

"We're being dictated to and not listened to," Cassis said. "The director's actions since the deferment announcement have eroded my faith in the governor's chief transportation officer."

(MORE)

The public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, June 18 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Oakland County Transportation Center, located at 2300 Dixie Highway, in Waterford. The Michigan Transportation Commissioners will hear arguments on why Wixom and Beck road projects should be added to the five year plan before the commission approves the plan.

“Since we are expecting the governor to veto the supplemental bill that includes the reinstatement of the 34 road projects, it is my sincere hope that this hearing is being conducted with the intention of adding the Beck and Wixom road projects to the current 5-Year Road and Bridge Plan,” Cassis said. “I am concerned that we are dealing with an administration that is more interested in public relations than public policy, and a governor who administers transportation policy through veto powers.”

#####